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Plate XI

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The inside of a tent. The baggage is hung from the tent poles. Very young children play on the ground, where a thick layer of fine sand has been placed.

Kel Ahaggar women, especially the Imrad women, often ride on the backs of asses. One of them has just met two friends, with whom she is exchanging news on the maharists who have gone far away.

1: Lhote--66a E-5 (1929-1940) 1944 MS25 Tuareg MS25

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

lashed together to form arches are manufactured by the Ayr women, or are imported from the south by the *Kel Geres* Tuareg when they visit Ayr at the end of the rains. The arches manufactured by the Ayr women are made from the very long horizontal roots (*tékéwt*) of the *afagay* acacia (*Acacia Raddiana*). Pieces of root of suitable size are placed over an open fire for a while, and are thereupon bent into the desired curve which is secured by cords. When the root pieces thus treated become dry they will retain their curved form; the cords are then untied and the root pieces fashioned with a knife. However, wooden arches imported by the *Kel Geres* are used by many Ayr Tuareg who claim that these arches are superior to their own. They are said to be manufactured from boughs (or roots?) of a tree known as *tarmamiya*, which does not grow in Ayr but in the *Kel Geres* country.

(2) Parallel to the three arches there are two pairs of cross-bars supported by vertical sticks, a pair being placed at both sides of the arches to form the narrow sides of the dwelling. These cross-bars are termed *tagar* (sing. *éseger*). They are sometimes made by blacksmiths, and are then provided with various ornaments including a little discus-like thickening carved at the middle of the bar. In fairly large tents each cross-bar is supported by four vertical sticks, the two middle ones of which are generally forked, while the two outer sticks are somewhat higher and attached to the cross-bar with cords. All these vertical sticks, including the outer ones which have no prongs, are termed *tigettewin* (sing. *tégettewt*). In smaller tents there are only two or three sticks supporting the cross-bar. The vertical sticks used to support the cross-bars are normally very simple. Sticks of the very light *turza* tree (*Calotropis procera*) are preferred.

(3) Over this skeleton of arches and cross-bars supported by vertical sticks are placed a number of slender curved rods which are termed *ilellewan* (sing. *alellewa*). These rods are made from acacia roots, as described above, or are rods of the *tarmamiya* tree imported from the south. These rods form semi-arches in the longitudinal direction of the tent. Each of these semi-arches consists of two identical rods fastened to the horizontal cross-bars at their thick end, while at their thin ends they are lashed together and fastened to the true arches. There is always a considerable number of these slender semi-arches, normally about ten.

The Ayr Tuareg use the following types of mats to cover the upper part of the dome-shaped structure:— *hwarweren* (sing. *dwerwer*), the mats made from plant stems tied to each other with leather thread (cf. p. 350); *ifal* (sing. *éwfel*), mats of an oval shape plaited from dum palm leaves; *asalemmus*, a long narrow piece of mat made from dum palm leaves. In addition there is the term *éreli* which designates the long narrow mat plaited from dum palm leaves surrounding the lower part of the tent structure. In very hot weather this mat is omitted so that currents of air may pass through the dwelling, while the tent is closed when it is cold, or during storms. A tent as that described has a dome-shaped or barrel-vaulted superstructure, the ground-plan being almost rectangular. A tent of normal size will measure about 3.00×4.50 m with a height of 1.80 to 1.90 m.

The mat tent is erected by one or two Tuareg women in the following way:—

(1) The ground is cleared; (2) The large wooden bed (*tédabut*), which is used everywhere in the south, is placed upon the ground to facilitate measuring; (3) Two large pronged posts, which serve to carry woman's riding cushions and various large skin bags, are placed behind the bed and fixed into holes dug by means of some iron implement, e.g., the cooking tripod, the broad end of a lance,

[text continues on p. 353]

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

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Fig. 276. The B.2.b.4 tent described in the text below. The central pair of vertical forked sticks with their cross-bar is seen to the right. Attached to the central cross-bar is a sword (*takoba*). At the bottom of the photograph to the right the upper parts of three elaborately carved wooden posts (*ihelan*, sing. *ehele*). The tent structure is similar to that depicted Fig. 277. From the *Kel Tahabanat* tribe, *Kel Ataram*, near Ayoru on the Niger.

*342 B.2.b.4. This is a type of tent which I saw among the *Western Iwillemmeden* west of Ayoru on the Niger. I had the opportunity to study its structure in the camp of the noble chief *Amdey* of the *Kel Tahabanat* tribe, and I saw similar tents among *Bélla* and slaves of the same region. The tent was said to be in use among all pastoralists including the vassal tribes, and I saw no other type of portable dwellings. The structure of this tent is the following:—

(1) Three pairs of vertical forked sticks (sing. *tegetthwt*) are placed parallel to one another and at right angles to the longitudinal direction. The two outer pairs of sticks are somewhat lower than the middle pair.

(2) Three horizontal cross-bars (sing. *eregaragay*) rest in the prongs of the three pairs of vertical sticks at right angles to the longitudinal direction.

(3) Three semi-arches (sing. *ézeger*), each of them being made of two slender rods, are placed over the horizontal cross-bars at right angles.

(4) A long cord (*tayant*) running along the upper structure fastenes the horizontal cross-bars to the prongs of the vertical sticks and the semi-arches to the cross-bars.

(5) A number of poles placed in the ground outside the structure serve the attachment of the skin sheet, or a sheet of green canvas which is sometimes used as a substitute for skin.